

than in the southern half of the continent. These vultures certainly are gregarious; for they seem to have pleasure in each other's society, and are not solely brought together by the attraction of a common prey. On a fine day, a flock may often be seen at a great height; each bird wheeling round and round in the most graceful evolutions. This is evidently done for their sport; or, perhaps, is connected (for a similar habit may sometimes be observed during the breeding season amongst our common rooks) with their matrimonial alliances.

2. CATHARTES AURA. *Ill.*

Vultur aura, *Linn.*

—, *Jardine's Wilson*, vol. iii. p. 226.

Vultur jota, *Molina*, Compendio de la Hist. del Reyno de Chile, vol i. p. 296.

Turkey-buzzard and Carrion Crow of the English in America.

THIS bird has a wide geographical range, being found from 55° S. to Nova Scotia (according to Wilson, in Jardine's edition, vol. iii. p. 231,) in 45° N.; or exactly one hundred degrees of latitude. Its lesser range in Northern than in Southern America is probably due to the more excessive nature of the climate in the former hemisphere. It is said to be partly migratory during winter, in the Northern and even in the Middle States, and likewise on the shores of the Pacific. The *C. aura* is found in the extreme parts of Tierra del Fuego, and on the indented coast, covered with thick forests, of West Patagonia, (but not on the arid plains of Eastern Patagonia,) in Chile, where it is called *Jote*, in Peru, in the West Indies; and, according to Wilson, it remains even during winter, in New Jersey and Delaware, latitude 40°. It and one of the family of Polyborinæ are the only two carrion-feeding hawks, which have found their way to the Falkland Islands. The Turkey buzzard, as it is generally called by the English, may be recognized at a great distance from its lofty, soaring and most graceful flight. It is generally solitary, or, at most, sweeps over the country in pairs. In Tierra del Fuego, and on the west coast of Patagonia, it must live exclusively on what the sea throws up, and on dead seals: wherever these animals in herds were sleeping on the beach, there this vulture might be seen, patiently standing on some neighbouring rock. At the Falkland Islands it was tolerably common; but sometimes there would not be a single one near the settlement for several days together, and then many would suddenly appear. They were usually shy; a disposition which is remarkable, as being different from that of almost every other bird in this Archipelago. May we infer from this that they are migratory, like those of the northern hemisphere? In a female specimen killed there, the skin of the head was intermediate in colour between

“scarlet and cochineal red,”* and the iris dark-coloured. D'Orbigny describes the iris as being bright scarlet; whilst Azara says it is “jaune léger.” Is this difference owing to the sex and age, as certainly is the case with the condors? As a considerable degree of confusion has prevailed in the synonyms of this and the foregoing species, caused apparently by a doubt to which of them Molina applied the name of *Jote*, I would wish to call attention to the fact, that at the present time the *C. aura* in Chile goes by the name of *Jote*. Moreover, I think Molina's description by itself might have decided the question; he says, the head of the *Vultur jota* is naked, and covered only with a wrinkled and reddish (roxiza) skin.

FAMILY—FALCONIDÆ.

SUB-FAM. POLYBORINÆ, *Swains.*

(Caracaridæ, D'Orbigny.)

POLYBORUS BRASILIENSIS. *Swains.*

Polyborus vulgaris, *Vieillot.*

Falco Brasiliensis Auctorum; Caracara of Azara; Tharu of Molina; and Carrancha of the inhabitants of La Plata.

THIS is one of the commonest birds in South America, and has a wide geographical range. It is found in Mexico and in the West Indies. It is also, according to M. Audubon, an occasional visitant to the Floridas; it takes its name from Brazil, but is no where so common as on the grassy savannahs of La Plata. It generally follows man, but is sometimes found even on the most desert plains of Patagonia: in the northern part of that region, numbers constantly attended the line of road between the Rio Negro and the Colorado, to devour the carcasses of the animals which chanced to perish from fatigue. Although abundant on the open plains of this eastern portion of the continent, and likewise on the rocky and barren shores of the Pacific, nevertheless it inhabits the borders of the damp and impervious forests of Tierra del Fuego and of the broken coast of West Patagonia, even as far south as Cape Horn. The Carranchas (as the *Polyborus Brasiliensis* is called in La Plata) together with the *P. chimango*†, attend in great numbers the estancias and slaughtering houses in the neighbourhood of the Plata. If an

* In this work, whenever the particular name of any colour is given, or it is placed within commas, it implies, that it is taken from comparison with Patrick Syme's edition of Werner's Nomenclature of Colours.

† *Mileago Chimango* of this work.